

WABASH HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION
Meeting minutes-November 7, 2001
Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room A
Indianapolis IN

Members present

Allen County-Ron James
Carroll County-Donna Romein
Cass County-Janet Fawley
DNR-Steve Morris
Fountain County-Ron Howard
Huntington County-Mike Mettler (alternate)
Knox County-Tracy Newberry
Miami County-Ken Einselen
Parke County-John Isaacs
Posey County-Jack Harmon
Sullivan County-John Gettinger
Tippecanoe County-Norman (Lucky)
Neiburger
Vigo County-Keith Ruble (alternate)
Wabash County-C. Robert Elrod
Warren County-Nancy Grenard
Wells County-Keith Huffman
DOC-Marianna Weinzapfel
DHPA-Jon Smith
IDEM-Matt Jarvis

Proxies

Adams County-Norman Neiburger

Members not present

Gibson County
Jay County
Vermillion County
INDOT

Visitors Present

Bernie Dahl-Banks of the Wabash
Carolyn Howard
Ted Harris-NICHES Land Trust
Dan McCain-Delphi Historic Trails & Canal
Rory Robinson-National Park Service
W. Thomas Straw-Posey County

DNR Staff Present

Dale Brier-DNR Outdoor Recreation
Bob Bronson-DNR Outdoor Recreation
Steve Kennedy-DNR Historic Preservation
Britt Long-DNR Outdoor Recreation
Julie Janes-DNR Outdoor Recreation
Jim Watson-DNR Outdoor Recreation

CALL TO ORDER

President Lucky Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. All attendees present introduced themselves. Thomas Straw was introduced as the future representative from Posey County. Jack Harmon and Nancy Grenard announced they would be leaving the commission at year's end and they were recognized for their years of service.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF September 5, 2001 MEETING MINUTES

John Isaacs motioned to approve the minutes as written. Ron Howard seconded. Motion passed.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

None

COMMISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Steve Morris reported that the \$10,000 for WRHCC for administrative costs has not been transferred yet. Steve continues to monitor the Budget Agency Administrative Action minutes for the transfer. Keith Huffman offered to contact Representative Epsich to ask for help with the transfer. There is \$469.19 showing in the account from the \$10,000 appropriated in 1997.

BANKS OF WABASH REPORT

Bernie Dahl reported that the BOW website is currently being updated. The website address is www.hort.purdue.edu/wabash.

OLD BUSINESS

Executive Director status

Steve Morris reported the Executive Director committee met November 7th, before the regular commission meeting. The committee has not yet come up with a performance plan and will have to meet again. Steve made the Executive Director position description available to all the members. The position is not affected by the state hiring freeze. Lucky said the committee is still wondering about hiring a person directly or going through an employment service. It would cost more to go through a hiring service. If the Commissioners know of anyone interested in the position, they should contact Steve Morris. Rory suggested that when the contract for this position is written, benchmarks be included. This will allow the person to be evaluated. Bernie Dahl will submit a proposal at the next committee meeting.

Corridor Management Plan

Rory Robinson explained a proposal for updating the corridor management plan. Rory suggested using the same approach as was done for the 1993 plan. Public meetings would take place in three sections of the corridor: northern, central and southern. The timeline would be:

First round of meetings (information gathering) - April 2002

Draft of plan - Spring 2003

Plan finished - Fall 2003

WRHCC involvement would be key for holding the public meetings. The commissioners would have to be present, showing their support for the plan. Rory is willing to speak at the meetings if introduced by the local WRHCC members. The management plan would be very useful for grant programs to reference. It would be similar to a parks master plan.

Other Business

Steve Morris asked everyone to fill out and sign his or her travel vouchers. They will be held with the other unpaid travel vouchers and paid when the WRHCC funds are transferred to the proper account.

There was brief discussion about parking for meetings at the Indiana Government Center.

Keith Huffman reported the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission should be formed by the end of the year. Dealing with logjams will be a primary concern for this commission. Keith will report again at the January meeting.

OLD BUSINESS (continued)

Grant Update

Bob Bronson reported that due to the current state financial crisis, the WRHC grant round will be postponed and grant applications will not be mailed out. The grants are funded from Build Indiana Funds (BIF) and those funds have been frozen. Bob does not know when the freeze will be lifted. This does not affect previously awarded grants or federal money. Janet Fawley motioned that the WRHCC write a letter to their legislators reminding them of all the good things the WHRC fund does for the corridor and to ask that the funds be released for grants when the financial crisis is over. A list of completed and future projects should be included in the letter. Ideas for future projects should be given to Ron James, who will draft the letter. The letter will also tell the legislators that the WRHCC is moving forward with their management plan and looks forward to grant rounds in the future. Motion passed.

BREAK

NEW BUSINESS

Commission Appointments for 2002-2004

Letters from Director Macklin were sent to county commissioners asking them to make appointments to the commission. A copy of the interpretive brochure was included. Current WRHCC commissioners and alternates who want to continue to serve on the WRHCC need to inform their county commissioners. Appointment resolutions are due back by December 31. Officer elections will take place at the January 2002 meeting and those elected will take their positions at the March meeting.

Suggestions for future speakers

Matt Jarvis will ask Jill Rhinehart to be a speaker for the January meeting. Jill is Section Chief for Watershed Management at Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Mike Mettler will ask Mike Hoover to speak at the March meeting. Mr. Hoover is the State Department of Health campground inspector.

John Gettinger will ask Sandy Drake to present at the May meeting. Sandy is an educator for a Soil and Water Conservation District who set up an education program for children to get involved with the river.

Letters sent/received

None

Other New Business Items

Nancy Grenard motioned that the WRHCC assemble information packets for the new members coming into office in January. Ron James seconded. Motion passed.

Dale Brier asked the Commissioners for articles for the 2002 newsletter.

Other New Business Items (continued)

John Gettinger motioned to move the January 2002 meeting date from January 2nd to January 9th so the meeting is not affected by the holiday. Keith Huffman seconded. Motion passed.

Nancy Grenard motioned to change the meeting date of the meetings from the first Wednesday of the month to the second. This would eliminate many of the holiday conflicts for the WRHCC. Janet Fawley seconded. Because this would change the by-laws, the motion was tabled and will be voted on in January.

Announcements

The Executive Director committee will meet November 14 at the Division of Outdoor Recreation. Lucky thanked the volunteers on all the special committees for their hard work and dedication.

Comments by visitors

Dan McCain announced the new interpretive center in Delphi is under construction. It is being built using with the help of WRHC grant money.

Mike Mettler reported that Dwight Ericsson was not seeking reappointment in 2002.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday January 9, 2002 at Indiana State Office Building, South. The meeting will be at 1:00 pm in Conference Room 4 and 5.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Ron James. Seconded by Keith Ruble. Motion passed.